

PRIVATE BRANCH EXCHANGE (PBX) CONDITIONING
METHOD AND APPARATUS

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

5 Method for maintaining a virtual presence of a first remote telephone user in a
PBX system having a frame relay network connection between two endpoint routers
while permitting the first remote user to make local calls includes first signaling a
PBX to represent the remote telephone as being off hook; routing a telephone call
placed at the remote telephone in accordance with a defined protocol; and when the
10 routed telephone call is terminated, second signaling the PBX to restore the on-hook
status of the remote telephone. Preferably, the first and second signaling are
performed in-band, in accordance with an FRF.11 or VToA AAL2 voice over packet
protocol. The telephone call-routing may be to a public switched telephone network
(PSTN) local to the remote telephone or it may be to another remote telephone user at
15 the same site within the PBX system as the first remote telephone user. The signaling
is to a PBX station interface associated with the PBX, so that the PBX in normal
response refuses or stores incoming calls directed to the remote telephone for the call's
duration. Apparatus includes a mechanism for selectively routing a telephone call
placed at a PBX-connected telephone to the local PSTN; a mechanism for first
20 signaling the PBX that the PBX-connected telephone is temporarily incapable of
receiving calls; a mechanism for detecting a termination of such a PSTN-routed
telephone call; and a mechanism responsive to the detecting mechanism for second
signaling the PBX that the PBX-connected telephone again is capable of receiving
calls.